Handicapping Analysis
Sat April 20th, 2024

Howard's Late Pick 4

Hawthorne Race 5

Post Time 4:50 PM CST

Analysis by Howard Kravets

Race 5: 4 - 1 - 3

Late Pick 4 ticket: 1,3,4 / 1,2,3,5,6,7 / 1,4 / 6,7 ($36)

#4 First Love (7-2) might be going, going, gone in this affair. Although the Kantheros filly is stepping up in class theoretically, an open $30k claimer at the Fairgrounds equates well to an N1X condition here at Hawthorne. She is simply the speed of the speed and will try to “bottom out” the field from the start. Loveberry will be aggressive early and hope to clear, then hang on. If the rail horse is up close, that might pose a problem for First Love late as she’s in fine form as well coming from Turfway Park with Felix in the irons.

Race 6: 5 - 7 - 3

For some reason, I just don’t trust the big morning line favorite, #7 West Island (7-5). He’s going to be odds-on at post time but is vulnerable especially if the #3 I’m Your Captain is aggressive early. Therefore, I’m going to take my first stab of the day on the top end with **#5 U S Honour Map (8-1)**. I like the cutback in the distance and he appears to be one of the few in the race that are capable of passing. I’m hoping jockey Hernandez takes back and makes one run…maybe the race will collapse late and he can pick up the pieces at a nice price.

Race 7: 1-4-5

#1 Hawaiian Hide Away (7-2) was able to set some decent fractions and hold on well when breaking his maiden 2 weeks ago. I don’t see a lot of early gas in the field, and the morning line favorite has a closing style that might not fit this race’s pace profile. I’d like to see Felix be aggressive from the inside with a short run into the first turn and give the gelding every opportunity to wire another field.

Race 8: 4-6-7

Although it’s rare for conditioned claimers to win two races in a row, **#4 Aunt Stella (3-1)** looks to do just that in the finale. She looked awfully good in winning a straight $5k claimer three weeks ago, and now faces a non-winners of two-races-in-a-year group. She received her 2nd highest Beyer top of her career last time, so maybe I should be more skeptical today. On the other hand, this is a pretty weak group and I see no reason why she can’t repeat again.